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Flashback

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Washington County Historical Society

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FLASHBACK

Journal of the Washington County Historical Society

Preserving Our Past for Future Generations

Volume 64 Summer 2014 Number 2

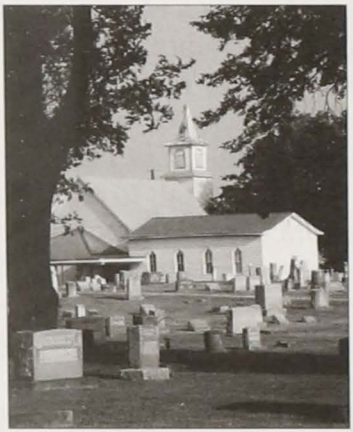
CONTENTS

Milley: A Tribute to a Washington County Pauper ...Page 51
By Anthony Wappel

Historic Nomination: Cumberland Presbyterian Church of Prairie Grove .....Page 58
By Susan Parks-Spencer and J.B. Hogan

Historic Nomination: Prairie Grove Cemetery .....Page 69
By Susan Parks-Spencer

A History of the Farmington Schools .....Page 78
By Deidre Steele Ness and Janie Buchanan Steele



On the cover: The Prairie Grove Cumberland Presbyterian Church and Cemetery are being nominated for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. The narrative history for their nominations is included here in the *Flashback* for future reference. The narratives begin on Page 58.

Milley: A Tribute to a Washington County Pauper

By Anthony Wappel
Washington County Archivist

While compiling an all-name index to the early records of the Washington County Court, I ran across several entries (all of which I have attached) for Milley, a pauper and an old woman of color. Unfortunately, Milley's age or surname was never given and it is not known if Milley was a former slave or a freed woman of color. Also, it is not known where Milley was buried. While it is common to see entries for paupers in the early County Court records, it is unusual to have so many entries for the same individual. Entries pertaining to Milley first appeared in 1843 and continued with each passing term of the court until 1848. With so many entries, I began to feel like I knew her, just as many historians and genealogists feel they know recurring characters or ancestors. As a result I was a little sad when I ran across the last few entries indicating Milley had passed.

In addition to this personal take on Milley, I thought it was interesting to note how the county took care of its impoverished residents in the days before the welfare state and even before the days of the Poor Farm. As the following entries and so many others of this period indicate, Washington County solicited bids from residents to take care of their poor. The county simply paid residents a certain amount of money per month or quarter to help board, feed, and clothe poor residents.

I was also curious about the people who chose to take care of Milley. The first known individuals to take care of her were Ten-

nessee natives Robert A. and Delila Stalcup Burney who came to Fayetteville around 1838. They took care of Milley in 1844 and briefly in 1846. The Burneys ended up in Texas by 1850.

William M. Bowers took care of Milley in 1844 and 1845. Bowers, who was originally a cabinet maker from Illinois Township, was Washington County Treasurer between 1844 and 1852. Probably because of his first-hand knowledge of the needs of poor people in the county, Bowers, along with A.W. Brownlee and James P. Neal, was on the commission to locate and purchase property for Washington County's first poor farm in 1852. Bowers later served in the Arkansas House of Representatives in 1852-1853.

Between 1846 and 1848, when Milley passed away, Mr. and Mrs. N.B. Wilcox took care of her. They were from New York. N.B. Wilcox was a veteran of the Mexican-American War. Wilcox was also a shoemaker, his shop being near the future location of Baum & Brothers store on the Fayetteville Square. This couple also ended up in Texas by 1870.

I wish there was more information about Milley. If anyone knows who this lady was, please contact the Washington County Historical Society. In the meantime, may Milley continue to rest in peace.

January 27, 1843

Where it has been represented to this court that Milley a colored woman a resident of this county is from age and infirmity unable to support herself and has no sufficient estate of her own and has not been removed from any other county for the purpose of imposing the charge of keeping her on this county. It is therefore ordered by the court that the sum of twenty dollars be and is hereby appropriated for feeding and clothing her until next term of this court to be paid out of any money in the treasury and that a warrant issue for the same to the person who shall thus feed and clothe her.

October 9, 1843

Ordered by the court that the Sheriff of Washington County let to the lowest bidder on Saturday next the 14th Inst at the court house in the Town of Fayetteville the keeping of the colored woman named Milley (a pauper) for the month.

January 16, 1844

Ordered by the court that Robert A. Burney be and he is hereby allowed the sum of twenty-five dollars for keeping a woman of color named Milley and a pauper and that warrant issue for the same in such denominations as the said Burney may require on his paying charges on the same.

January 19, 1844

And on this day in pursuance of the order of the court the colored woman Milley a pauper was bid off at public auction to the lowest bidder when Robert A. Burney became the bidder therefore at the sum of two dollars per week for the next three months.

April 13, 1844

On motion ordered by the court that R.A. Burney be allowed the sum of twenty six dollars for feeding Milley a pauper three months and that warrants issue for the same.

October 18, 1844

Ordered by the court that William M. Bowers be and is hereby allowed the sum of twenty six dollars for keeping Milley and that the clerk issue warrants therefore of such denominations as he may desire.

April 18, 1845

Ordered by the court that William M. Bowers be and he is hereby allowed the sum of fifty eight dollars and fifty cents for taking care of Milley, a pauper for the last six months and that the clerk issue this amount of such denominations as the said Bowers may require at his expense.

July 18, 1845

Ordered by the court that William M. Bowers be and he is hereby allowed the sum of twenty six dollars for keeping Milley a pauper as per account filed.

October 18, 1845

Ordered by the court that William M. Bowers be and he is hereby allowed the sum of twenty six dollars for keeping Milley a pauper for the last three months.

January 26, 1846

Ordered by the court that Mrs. Burney be and she is hereby allowed the sum of thirteen dollars and fifty cents for keeping Milley a pauper and that the clerk issue the scrip in such prices as she may request upon the payment of the costs for issuing.

Ordered by the court that William M. Bowers be and he is hereby allowed the sum of fifteen dollars and seventy five cents for keeping Milley a pauper as per account filed.

April 15, 1846

Ordered by the court that Delila Burney be and she is hereby allowed the sum of forty five dollars for keeping Milley a pauper and clothes, fuel etc, furnished for the last three months.

July 15, 1846

Ordered by the court that Delila Burney be and she is hereby allowed the sum of twenty six dollars for keeping Milley a pauper for the last three months.

October 14, 1846

Ordered by the court that Delila Burney be and she is hereby allowed the sum of twenty five dollars for keeping Milley a pauper to twelve o'clock Thursday the 8th of the just from the last term of this court and that scrip issue for the same is such denominations as may be required upon the payment of costs for issuing.

The court on behalf of the county and N.B. Wilcox enter into this agreement that the said N.B. Wilcox will keep Milley a black woman and pauper at the rate of sixty dollars per year wood and clothing for said pauper to be furnished by the county the said Wilcox to be paid quarterly.

January 27, 1847

Ordered by the court that Washington Denison be an he is hereby allowed the sum of two dollars for his care and attention in boarding old Milley a pauper one week.

April 13, 1847

On motion and account filed it is ordered by the court that N.B. Wilcox be and he is hereby allowed the sum of twenty three dollars and ninety three cents for keeping Milley a pauper and furnishing her with wood and one dress.

July 12, 1847

Ordered by the court that N.B. Wilcox be and he is hereby allowed the sum of sixteen dollars and fifty cents for keeping Milley a pauper three months and furnishing her one quilt as per account filed.

October 12, 1847

And now on this day the court let out Milley a pauper by contract to Mrs. Wilcox at the price of sixty dollars per year which is the be paid quarterly. And the county is to furnish the said Milley her clothing and firewood.

Ordered by the court that N.B. Wilcox be and he is hereby allowed the sum of fifteen dollars for keeping Milley a pauper the last three months.

January 12, 1848

Ordered by the court that Mrs. N.B. Wilcox be and she is hereby allowed the sum of thirty two dollars and sixty cents for boarding clothing and wood furnished Milley pauper as her account filed.

April 11, 1848

Ordered by the court that Mrs N.B. Wilcox be and she is hereby allowed the sum of thirty dollars and thirty eight cents for boarding Milley a pauper three months firewood clothing etc.

July 11, 1848

Ordered by the court that Tilmon & Wisenor be and he is hereby allowed the sum of ten dollars for making a coffin for old Milley a pauper per account filed.

On motion it is ordered by the court that James Sutton be and he is hereby allowed the sum of twelve dollars and thirty seven and a half cents for quill pens, chairs, and shroud for old Milley etc. as per account filed.

Ordered by the court that Mrs. Wilcox be and she is hereby allowed the sum of ten dollars for keeping Milley a pauper one month and for labor trouble and expense during her sickness death and burial etc as per account filed.

October 10, 1848

Ordered by the court that William Bowers be and he is allowed the sum of seven dollars for repairing courthouse fence, paying for digging old Milley's grave also taking her to the grave and making one writing table for grand jury room.

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Washington County Historical Society is a 501c3 nonprofit corporation. Gifts above membership of $25 are tax deductible.

Historic Nomination: Cumberland Presbyterian Church of Prairie Grove

EDITOR'S NOTE: Susan Parks Spencer, a board member of the Washington County Historical Society, has led an effort to nominate the Cumberland Presbyterian Church of Prairie Grove and the surrounding Prairie Grove Cemetery for either the National Register of Historic Places or the Arkansas Register of Historic Places. The following is the narrative submitted to describe the history and historic qualities of the church, which is located at 202 West Buchanan Street. The narrative, which starts with background about the county, Prairie Grove and the early church, is followed by narrative for the Prairie Grove Cemetery nomination.

By Susan Parks Spencer
and J.B. Hogan

The land now known as Washington County, Arkansas, was first home to Native American tribes such as the Osage and Cherokee. In 1817, this territory was part of Lovely's Purchase, named after Major William Lovely, who bought the land from the Osage Indians in hopes that it would serve as a boundary between the rival Osage, Cherokee, and white settlers. Legislators representing Arkansas territory established Lovely County in 1827 that included what is now Washington County. Almost exactly a year later, borders along Indian Territory were drawn up, and Washington County was officially established.

Pioneers of Washington County built small communities in which they farmed the land. Mills were built along the creeks flowing through the countryside, where many of the crops were processed. The climate was well suited for apple orchards and

tomatoes, which became fairly numerous on many farms. Settlers in the Prairie Grove area during the mid-late 1800s discovered rich soil near the Illinois River, and fruits and vegetables later became an important part of the town's economy, especially after the Ozark and Cherokee Central railroad opened a depot on the south side of town in 1901.

Beginning in 1840, the community of what is now Prairie Grove was known by the names of its post offices. The first one, Sweet Home, was open for six years. In 1857, the Ada post office was established and named after the daughter of the postmaster. This building was just north of the site of the Civil War Battle of Prairie Grove. The post office received many bullet holes during the fighting, and residents would stop by after the war and pull bullets from the wooden structure. When the old post office was eventually razed, the front door with its many bullet holes was stored in a nearby residence where, in 1940, the door was unfortunately consumed by fire. Prairie Grove was incorporated in 1888, and in 1890 the first census recorded 412 residents.

Around 1826, a group of Cumberland Presbyterian travelers arrived in the area now known as Cane Hill. These people, in addition to seeking a new life on what was then the western frontier of the United States, were devout and education-minded.

Almost as soon as they established themselves in Cane Hill, the Cumberland Presbyterians built churches and schools. From an early school came the renowned Cane Hill College, recognized as not only a fine educational institution, but also as one of the very first in our county. From Cane Hill, the Cumberland Presbyterians moved northeasterly in the area, establishing churches in other newly created places such as Prairie Grove and Fayetteville.

The significance of the Cumberland Presbyterians can be seen not only in their establishment of churches and schools, but in the very creation of the county seat in Fayetteville. Two of the original Washington County Commissioners who established the county in 1828 were James Buchanan and John Wooddy (also Woody). These men, founding members of the Cum-

A group from Benton County visits the Prairie Grove Cumberland Church in rooms were added in the early 1900s.

Photo originally from William C. Good; Courtesy of Prairie Grove Cumberland Church

1896. The large doors were removed when a vesitbule and two small

berland Presbyterian community in Cane Hill, actually named Fayetteville after their own original hometown of Fayetteville, Tennessee. The Cane Hill group also established the first Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Fayetteville as well.

In 1824, Tennessee native and Kentucky resident, Andrew "Uncle Buck" Buchanan, became a candidate for the Cumberland Presbyterian Church ministry. Five years later, Rev. Buchanan and his family left Kentucky for Arkansas. While visiting his brothers in Cane Hill, Rev. Buchanan heard of a fertile valley with a bountiful spring several miles to the east. Arriving at the spring he found a settler, Tom Wagnon, who had already laid claim to the land. However, Wagnon agreed to trade the land to Uncle Buck in exchange for two sermons. Sometime afterwards, Rev. Buchanan organized the Prairie Congregation of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, as well as a school, but where each group met is unknown. On September 21, 1838, Andrew Buchanan and his wife, Sinai, sold a little over two and a half acres of land for $25 to representatives of the Prairie Congregation for the "use and benefits of a place for the worship of God[,] for teaching school, and for a burying ground for all peoples who may wish to rites their dead there." Sometime later, over half of the property's west side was donated to the Prairie Grove Cemetery Association. This section is where Andrew and Sinai Buchanan are buried.

In a letter dated April 9, 1978 from Thomas H. Campbell of Harrison, Arkansas, to a Cumberland Presbyterian church member in Prairie Grove, Lucille Mast, Campbell discusses his research regarding the church's founding and quotes from an article written by F.T. Charlton in the May 1, 1890 issue of the Cumberland Presbyterian. Charlton specifies a year that the church was officially organized, as well as the date of the third and current church's dedication:

> The congregation at Prairie Grove, Arkansas, has just completed a new church which was dedicated last Sunday, April 20. The house is a good one[,] neat and

> attractive. It was paid for before the day of dedication, no collections taken on that day. It was a day of gladness with the members of the church and their friends. Notwithstanding the cloudy weather, the house was crowded, both sitting and standing room being occupied. This is an old congregation, having been organized in 1831. For several years it was in a rather unpromising condition, but during the past two or three years, under the efficient ministration of Rev. G.A. Henderson, it has been quickened and strengthened and bids fair to become a healthy and useful church.

In another letter written on May 28, 1980 to the church's current pastor, Rev. Harold Bartholomew, Mr. Campbell describes his most recent findings of the church's early history. The first mention of a Prairie Congregation is found in the spring 1834 minutes of the Arkansas Presbytery. However, he writes, "...Minutes of Arkansas Presbytery for 1832 and 1833 are missing."

The construction date of the first church is unknown, however a church document refers to it as a "log building." Church session minutes dated May 23, 1851 and subsequent session meetings throughout the 1850s and into 1860 indicate that the congregation called their building the Prairie Meeting House.

Arkansas seceded from the United States government on May 6, 1861 and joined the Confederacy. On December 7, 1862, Union and Confederate armies fought a bloody battle on what is now the Prairie Grove Historic Battlefield State Park, less than two miles from what the soldiers called "the Prairie Grove Church." About a day before the battle began, Confederate General Thomas C. Hindman "reached Prairie Grove about 11 a.m. and briefly established his headquarters in an old church house."

During the first day of the battle, wounded Confederate soldiers were taken to the Prairie Grove Church, where surgeons with the Southern Army tried in vain to keep up with the incoming injured. Toward sunset on December 7th, two Union soldiers with the 20th Wisconsin Infantry, John Henry Smith and Thom-

as P. Murry, walked from the battlefield toward the makeshift hospital. Some years later, Smith wrote what they came upon...

> "...a church that had been taken possession of for a hospital and there, Oh, merciful God, what a sight met our eyes. All around the church laid three or four ranks of wounded soldiers, placed side by side, dozens of them dying for want of surgical aid; some bleeding to death while a bandage around a leg or arm would have saved their lives but no one was allowed to touch them but a surgeon with a diploma so you see a great many of the men outside patiently waiting for the aid that came too late, died for want of help. With heavy hearts we look inside of the church. It is brightly lighted and rows of wounded men laid on the floor all around the four walls and in the center of the room long tables were erected where wounded men were laid and the surgeons and their assistants were busy cutting and sawing off legs and arms and doing surgical work on all kinds of wounds. The men who were being treated first, of course, were the commissioned officers, the private soldiers had to wait until all the men of rank were attended to. As each regiment only had one surgeon and an assistant, it is easy to see how these poor boys outside on a frosty December night with the sky for a covering must have suffered before surgical aid reached them. Tired, wounded and cold, chilled through from loss of blood, most of them had been without food for thirty-six hours. We then stepped outside of the church again and looked over rows of wounded as they lay side by side in the cold."

Sometime after the battle, the Confederate soldiers and surgeons vacated the church. The Union Army then commandeered the building, where it "was taken down & used in constructing winter quarters for federal Soldiers in the winter of 1863." It is

Courtesy of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church

The Prairie Grove Cumberland Presbyterian Church as it appeared about 1910.

undocumented as to what happened to the "winter quarters" when the Union left Prairie Grove, but it is possible that the building or buildings were burned. The church and its property are one of the stops on the Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park's CD driving tour of the Civil War battle.

Church documents show a gap between pastors from 1860-1872. In 1873 Rev. John Buchanan is on record as the church's next preacher. This year or the next might be when the next church, a wood frame building, was constructed. Session minutes from February 21, 1874 state that their meeting was held at Prairie Church. Previous session minutes had no mention of the location where they met.

This second church was built behind where the first church stood and faced east. It was also used as a school. During 1887-1888, according to church records, the third and current church was built and then dedicated in April 1890. The wood frame building behind it was possibly used as a school building until around 1900, when the first public school in Prairie Grove opened. In 1911 the old church and school building was sold by the highest sealed bid to the First Presbyterian Church of Prairie Grove, who used the wood to build their manse, which is still standing.

Prairie Grove was incorporated on July 25, 1888. The street running through downtown and in front of the Cumberland Church was named Buchanan in honor of Andrew Buchanan and his family.

In the Session Meeting on September 1, 1890, the elders agreed to submit a claim to "The United States government for distruction [sic] of Church House during the late war..." On July 10, 1905, the session clerk wrote that the church had received a reparations check for $800 from the federal government. Attorney fees totaled $266.67, which left the church with $523.33. During the fall of 1906, the congregation used part of that money to purchase new pews for $444 plus $44.64 in freight charges.

The Cumberland Presbyterian Church of Bethel Grove in Washington County was built sometime after 1915. The land was sold to congregation members that year for one dollar and the promise of a church to be built. By 1959, however, the Bethel Grove Church had ceased having services, and the building was in need of repair. The fourteen remaining members of the Bethel Grove Church agreed to give the building to the Cumber-

Photo by Charlie Alison

One of the eight stained glass windows of the Prairie Grove Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

land Presbyterian Church. The Prairie Grove congregation had the church moved to the west side of the main church and connected the two buildings with a covered concrete walkway. It was used as their Fellowship Hall.

During the latter part of the 20th century, the church began experiencing a decline in membership. By 2013, there were less than 10 active members left. Due to its small congregation numbers, the church held its last service on March 30, 2014.

The Cumberland Presbyterian Church is a historic landmark in downtown Prairie Grove. That building, its previous two incarnations, and its connection to the Civil War battle are an important part of Prairie Grove and Cumberland Presbyterian history.

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Historic Nomination: Prairie Grove Cemetery

By Susan Parks-Spencer

The Prairie Grove Cemetery is located next to Highway 62 West on the west end of downtown Prairie Grove. The Cumberland Presbyterian Church, built in 1887-1888, sits on the southeast corner of the cemetery. This section of land is owned by the Arkansas Presbytery of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and no burials are on this site. The first owner of the cemetery property, known today as the "Original Addition," which then included the church property, was Rev. Andrew "Uncle Buck" Buchanan and his wife, Sinai Buchanan. Highway 62 on the south side of the cemetery is Buchanan Street, named after Andrew Buchanan and his family. Rev. Buchanan and his wife sold a little over two and a half acres of land for $25 to members of his Prairie Congregation of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Stipulations of the sale in the 1838 deed included the congregation's promise to construct a church, a school, and to use a portion of the land as a cemetery.

The Prairie Grove Cemetery, looking east from its western boundary, with the

Photo by Charlie Alison

Cumberland Presbyterian Church in the background.

Later, at an unknown date, the church donated over half of the western section of the property to the Prairie Grove Cemetery Association. The Cemetery Association, which was granted non-profit status in 1985, continues as the current owner of the cemetery and raises funds to help pay for its maintenance through sales of cemetery lots as well as donations.

The cemetery was expanded in 1900 with the Baggett Addition on the west side of the Original Addition. In chronological order, the next Additions were the Cummings Addition north of the Original Addition in 1917, the Dodson Addition north of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church property in 1958, the Rogers Addition north of the Cummings Addition in 1960, and the Loyd L. Baggett Addition west of the Original Addition in 1966. In 1985, the Cemetery Association purchased 5½ acres northwest of the Prairie Grove Cemetery. This land was partitioned into four 20-foot by 12-foot additions. Only two of these additions have been named. The Bell/Carl Addition is on the southeast corner, and the Blakemore Addition is on the northeast side. The southwest and northwest additions are unnamed and not in use at this time.

Many hand-carved marble and sandstone markers are found throughout the older additions. There are several gravestones with the wood stump features of the Woodmen of the World's fraternal organization. Marble columns in the oldest additions are visible from Highway 62. Inscriptions on some of the older monuments are almost unreadable due to age, and there are gravestones that are broken. Field markers made of rock or stone mark unknown graves from the 1800s. These markers are scattered among the older additions, and many have been hit by mowers or moved around by people throughout the years. In years past, there were numerous unmarked graves discovered throughout the Dodson Addition by the local funeral home workers as they were digging new graves. That section of the cemetery was eventually abandoned for others, since they were unable to find unoccupied plots.

There is no cemetery sign or main entrance. Instead, there

are five entryways leading into the cemetery: two from Highway 62 on the south side of the cemetery, two from Kate Smith Street on the cemetery's east side, and one entrance off of Parks Street in the northwest section. All are paved, with the exception of the road that marks the northernmost entrance off of Kate Smith Street, whose boundaries make up the northern edge of the Rogers, Cummings, and Dodson Additions. The south side of the cemetery is bordered by a drainage ditch, which was constructed during 1941 by men employed through the United States Government's Works Progress Administration (WPA) New Deal program. Arkansas Highway Department trucks brought in native stone that was placed on the north wall of the ditch. A bridge spanning the drainage ditch on the southwest corner of the Baggett Addition was built as an entrance to the cemetery. Another entrance was later added west of that access point.

The location of the first grave in the Prairie Grove Cemetery is not known. Chunks of rock or stone that served as grave markers are scattered throughout the older additions. Some are broken, and others have disappeared. The oldest recorded grave in the cemetery is of a five-year-old girl, Rachel C. Marrs, who died in 1818. The second oldest documented burial was of another child, Mary Ann Crawford (1822-1824). Until recently, Tennessee resident Mary Percilla Inman was thought to have been the first person buried in Prairie Grove. Miss Inman was visiting relatives in nearby Cane Hill when she became ill and died in 1831. Before her death, she asked to be buried in the beautiful valley she had traveled through on her way to Cane Hill. The Prairie Grove Cemetery Association in 1941 placed a commemorative marble headstone at her grave with the inscription, "First Grave in Prairie Grove." When the Marrs and Crawford markers were discovered a short time ago, the Inman grave became the third oldest recorded internment in the cemetery.

Some notable Prairie Grove residents buried in the cemetery include:

Colonel **James Preston Neal** (1820-1896), who is buried in the Original Addition near his mother Sinai Buchanan and step-

father, Rev. Andrew Buchanan, was the founder of Prairie Grove. Neal, a lawyer, was a veteran of the Mexican-American War in the late 1840s and mayor of Fayetteville, Arkansas, from 1851-1854. At the beginning of the Civil War in 1861, Neal joined the Confederate forces and was made "an elector" and voted for Jefferson Davis as president of the Confederacy. He also helped provide Confederate forces with much-needed supplies, eventually earning the rank of colonel. In 1875, four years after moving to his stepfather's Prairie Grove farm, Neal decided to establish a town. A plat for the downtown area was drawn up, and Neal opened the first "merchandising" business. He also served as postmaster from 1873-1877.

Nancy Morton Staples (1831-1921) was born in Prairie Grove and experienced many hardships during the Civil War. Mrs. Staples taught school as well as a Sunday school class, but after war was declared bushwhackers and other lawless men began roaming the hills. So, Mrs. Staples moved her students to a barn loft. Immediately after the Battle of Prairie Grove she attended to the needs of wounded soldiers on the battlefield until they were taken to the Cumberland Presbyterian Church or other makeshift hospitals in the area. To protect the dead soldiers from wild hogs that wandered the countryside, she and other local women constructed wood fences around the stacks of corpses. Later, bushwhackers invaded her ailing father's house and began burning his feet with a hot poker in an attempt to force him to tell where he had hidden his money. Mrs. Staples, who was at the house, grabbed the poker, seriously burning her hands. She was later given an honorary membership to the United Daughters of the Confederacy's Prairie Grove Chapter.

Dr. **E.G. McCormick** (1855-1938), a physician, came to Prairie Grove in 1884 and set up a medical practice. A year later he helped start the town's first newspaper, the *Prairie Grove News* that was edited by Joseph Garrison. In 1888, Dr. McCormick and another doctor, W. W. Mahan, were tired of rowdy behavior and drunkenness occurring in the area and wrote a letter of incorporation and petition on a piece of notebook paper and sent it

to the county judge. Prairie Grove was incorporated on July 25, 1888. Dr. McCormick's practice was next to his brother William McCormick and M. M. Collier's drug store. To facilitate faster prescription orders, Dr. McCormick strung a telephone wire from his office to the pharmacy. Eighteen years later, he and M. M. Collier incorporated the Prairie Grove Telephone Company, which is still in operation and owned by descendants of the doctor. He also helped establish a telephone line between Prairie Grove and Fayetteville that was the longest line at that time in the state of Arkansas. Dr. McCormick also founded and was president of the first canning factory, Prairie Grove Canning and Evaporating Co. He played an instrumental part in establishing a railroad line in Prairie Grove and other towns in west Washington County, when, in 1901 the Ozark-Cherokee Central opened. Dr. McCormick and other families helped organize the Southern Presbyterian Church in Prairie Grove in 1905. And in early 2014, he was added to the Hall of Honor at the Arkansas Country Doctor Museum in Lincoln, Arkansas, in recognition of his commitment to healthcare and contributions to his community.

Prairie Grove businessman **Ernest H. Dorman** (1859-1938) owned Dorman Monument Works just east of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Dorman was born in England and immigrated with his family to Fayetteville, Arkansas, as a young boy. He began training as a monument maker at age 19 and later opened his own business in Fayetteville, where he stayed until 1886 when he moved to Prairie Grove. His gravestones were hand-carved with a hammer and chisel until 1932 when he began using a sand blaster. Dorman has many hand-carved headstones in the Prairie Grove Cemetery, as well as other cemeteries in the region. Besides English, Dorman also inscribed tombstones in Latin, German, and Cherokee. The sandstone he used was mined from a quarry he owned in the community of Mountain Gap, located east of Prairie Grove.

James Frank Holmes (1876-1947) was a Georgia lawyer who moved to Prairie Grove in 1931. A year later, he was elected mayor and served in that position until 1941. During the time

he was mayor, Mr. Holmes helped organize the construction of the city's water and sewer systems. He was also instrumental in starting a public library for Prairie Grove residents. In 1941 he left the mayor's office to serve in the Arkansas House of Representatives for several years.

A native of Tennessee, **Joy Nelson Webb** (1891-1976) was married to Prairie Grove dentist Dr. **James W. Webb** (1878-1947). From 1926-1932, she was owner and publisher of the weekly *Prairie Grove Herald*. Throughout her life in Prairie Grove, Mrs. Webb collected information concerning the history of Prairie Grove and its residents. At her death, she left her home and its contents to the Prairie Grove Woman's Club with the request that the house be used as a library for the public and a meeting facility for the Woman's Club. In 2003, the Cemetery Association constructed the Mrs. Joy Webb Memorial Pavilion that is used for outdoor funeral or memorial services. The Pavilion is located on the southeast corner of the Blakemore Addition.

Dr. **Fred McCuistion** (1891-1969) and his wife, **Madge McCuistion** (1904-2004) were a driving force in helping establish the Prairie Grove Battlefield Park, which later became an Arkansas state park commemorating the Battle of Prairie Grove. Dr. McCuistion's plan during the 1950s was to bring in historic buildings from the surrounding area to form a "Pioneer Village" showing how the early settlers and their families lived. Mrs. McCuistion's wish was to highlight the area's handmade arts and crafts. On Labor Day in 1951, the Ozark Guild of Artist and Craftsmen (that later merged with the Arts Center of the Ozarks in Springdale, Arkansas), of which Mrs. McCuistion was a member, strung a clothesline in the park for artists to exhibit their works. This art display evolved into the yearly Clothesline Fair that continues to be held every Labor Day weekend at the Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park and attracts thousands of visitors.

Generations of families are buried in the Prairie Grove Cemetery. Rachel C. Marrs and Mary Ann Crawford, the two young girls with the oldest headstones in the cemetery, were both related to the Buchanan family. Descendants of the Buchanans still

live in the area. Other pioneer families buried in the cemetery include Blakemore, Borden, Campbell, Carl, Carnahan, Carney, Cummings, Cunningham, Dearing, Edmiston, English, Hannah, Morton, Parks, Pittman, Pyeatt, Rogers, Shofner, Tilley, West, and Wilson.

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A History of Farmington Schools

By Deidre Steele Ness
and Janie Buchanan Steele

The First Settlers

Prior to October of 1828, the land that comprised what is now known as Northwest Arkansas was not open for settlement. During that time, the land was occupied by the Cherokee, and had previously belonged to the Osage. Following broken treaties to the Native Americans, the Indian Territory was relocated to what is now Oklahoma, allowing for settlement opportunities in the previously reserved land.

Farmington's earliest settlers began arriving in 1829, and by 1833 the small population had already begun to plan for the future education of their children. Following this direction, a log cabin was built in 1834, featuring one room with a fireplace and backless split-log benches. Officially christened the Ebenezer Meeting House, the building was used as a school house, a Methodist Episcopal Church, and a community gathering place.

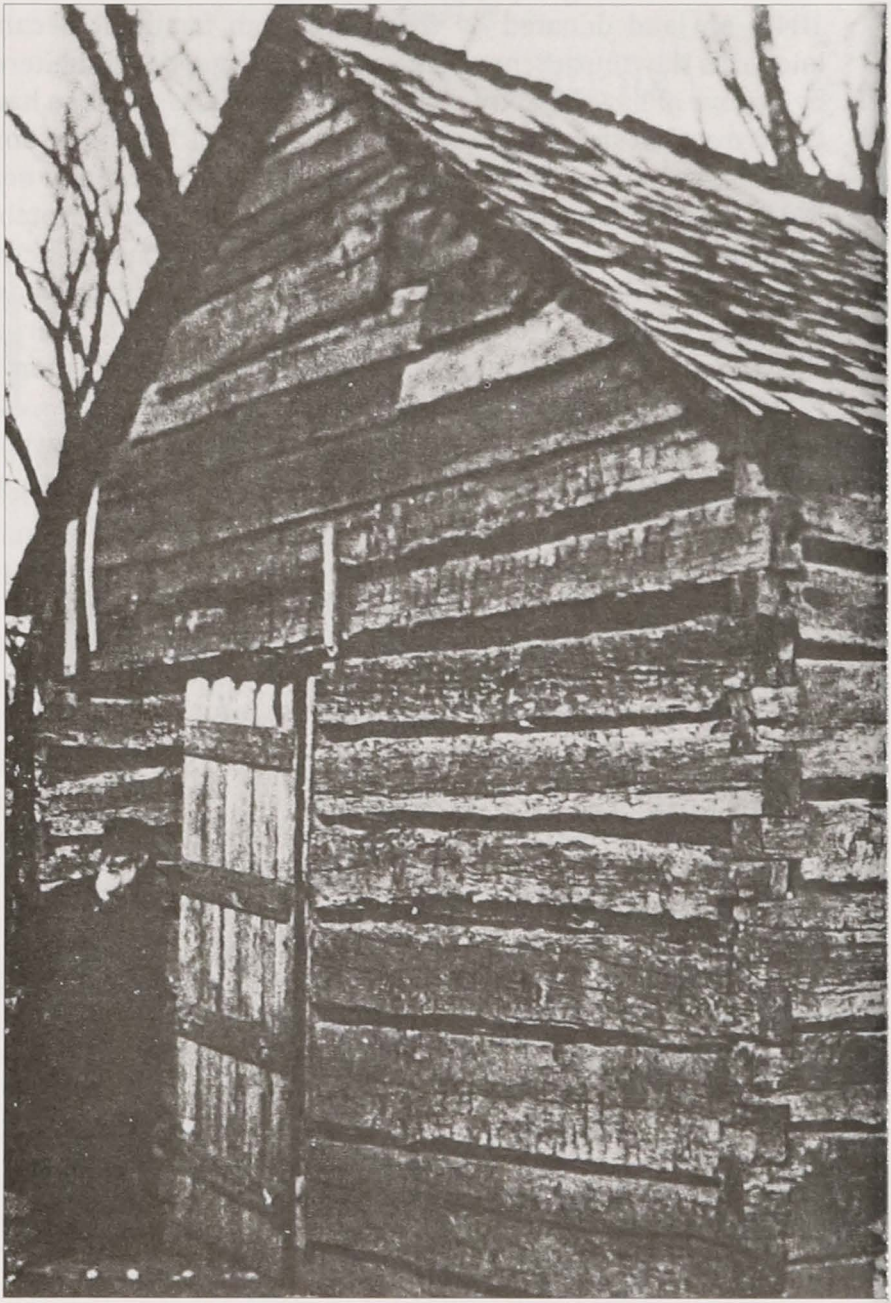
In 1837, Ebenezer Meeting House also became the first place of congregation for the Baptist Church, and subsequently, both churches and the school took on the name Ebenezer. The first school was located on what is now Lossing Street, north of the bus parking lot, and on the Buchanan property.

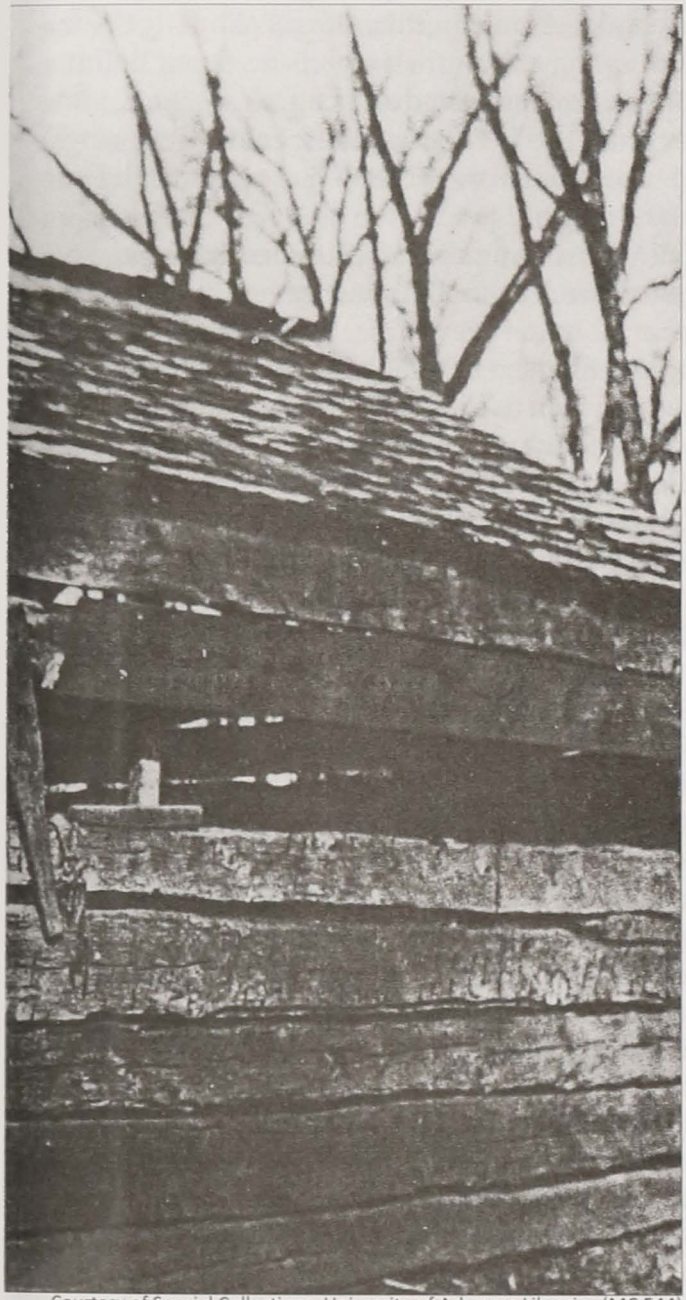
In the 1840s, William Stewart arrived in Farmington and began The Singing Geography School. This night class was held at the school house and was attended by both children and adults. The objective of Stewart's class was to provide knowledge of geographical facts of the world and the United States, which were sung by the students. William Stewart continued on to teach this class at the Viney Grove School near Prairie Grove.

A new building replaced the Ebenezer Meeting House in 1848, on land donated by the Kinnibrugh family. It became known as Hawthorn School because it was shaded and sheltered by a grove of hawthorn trees, some say there was only one hawthorn tree that stood near the door of the school. The Hawthorn School was located north of what is now White Street and near Ridge Drive. This school building was in use until 1858. Notable individuals who taught throughout Hawthorn School's active years were Odle, Menny, Rice, Davis, Franklin Lombarger and Martin K. Walker. Each teacher carried a "pen knife" to sharpen the students' quill pens and the early teachers received a monthly stipend and boarded with families in the community.

The following was written in an edition of *Sentinel* newspaper in September 1877, nearly twenty years after the Hawthorn School closed:

> Hawthorn School House is an aged log structure, one story high, and about sixteen feet square, with a log sawed out the entire length on one side, and a little hole two feet square on the other side for ventilation and light. The fire-place, which is made of stones, is on the north side, and a low, wide door on the south. The building is now occupied by fleas and cattle. Martin Walker used to teach here, and is the only teacher that any particular mention is made of, so far as I can hear. Men and women live in this vicinity who used to go to school to him, that are now gray and wrinkled. It is worth one's while to listen to these men at their age tell about their school boy days, and their adventures with their teacher. How he used to lick them on their bare legs with a thorn bush when their breeches were rolled up, and how the shot-gun used to be brought in for bulldozing on the part of the boys. But they all seem to agree that Martin, as they familiarly call him, was the best teacher they ever had.





Courtesy of Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries (MC 544)

Farmington's second school was called The Hawthorn School. This photo was taken in 1908 when the log cabin school house was being used as a barn. The man standing near the door at left is thought to be William Engels.

A third school building was built in 1858, located on two acres of land donated by Andrew and Matilda Allen. Following the tradition of the founding log cabin, the larger one room building was also named Ebenezer and served as a church, a school, and a community center until 1891. The second Ebenezer School was located on what is now the Farmington Cemetery, near the outdoor pavilion on Lois Smith Drive.

During the Civil War, many schools, churches, barns and out buildings were torn down by the Union Army and the wood was used for building barracks in Fayetteville. Miss Sultana Trent defiantly moved into the Ebenezer School house and taught a few children, strategies in which to prevent the Union Army from destroying the building. Sultana Trent's brother, McKinley Trent, served as the building's school teacher for three years. He rode his horse to and from school, but was not able to walk due to injuries from his service in the Civil War. Students remember him teaching while being confined to a wheelchair. Trent's time at the Ebenezer School was followed by teachers Rosser, Welch and Adair.

The Ebenezer School was used for over thirty years. Although there is only one known photograph of the school, in the mid-1900s several people were interviewed about their experiences within the establishment. Henry Benson Shreve, Bertha Engels Gaskill, Bonnie Gore Broyles, Beulah J. Smith and Ora Brooks Lewis shared their memories of the Ebenezer School, including the playground and the school chores. Their stories are recorded in the *Flashback* collections, as well as in newspaper articles over the years. The *Flashback* collections may be found at the Fayetteville Public Library and at the Shiloh Museum in Springdale.

Separation during leisure time required that boys and girls were not allowed to play together at the school. The girls played ante-over and hopscotch and the boys played marbles, pop-the-whip, and baseball. On Friday afternoons the school would hold speeches, readings and spelling bees.

The older boys in the school were responsible for bringing

the water from Engels' spring every morning. They followed a path from the playground that led through the woods to the Kinnibrugh house, and onward to the spring. The current location of the spring is near the Subway restaurant (188 W. Main Street) on the east side of the creek.

The Ebenezer School was tax supported for three to six months each year. The other remaining months required a $1.25 monthly tuition, often paid in the form of salt, bacon, corn and other grains, and tobacco. The Farmington citizens had reservations about paying taxes to the state for school purposes. An excerpt from the August 1877 *Sentinel* details this mindset.

> The school question is sadly in need of friends in this forty-one-year-old member of these United States, and the papers that would educate the people up to the necessity of a good working school system would be doing a great public service. The school law is good enough, but when public sentiment is indifferent about the law, it is of little use practically. Now, if the name "public school" is odious, call it by any other name, and give it a fair trial. A great many persons say in a general way, "Oh, the public schools are no account the way they are run." If those persons would just think a moment they would see that such an objection reflected on themselves, for they have the management of their own district, and if the school is "no account" it is their fault. The building used for school purposes at this place was built for a church, and is good enough for the purpose for which it was constructed, but it is in no way fit for a school room; yet the parents of the children will doubtless find fault with both children and teacher when school closes because more had not been accomplished. The people have yet to learn that sending their children to boarding schools is an expensive luxury, besides their being away from home influence, which is a very important item. There's nothing

Farmington's third school was located in the present-day Farmington Cemetery. This photo ran in the Flashback with identities of many of the students. Date of the photo might be from as early as the 1890s, but clothing styles seem more

Photo courtesy of Shiloh Museum of Ozark History, WCHS Collection (P-457)

The building was used as a school house and as a church for over 30 years. the photo is not completely clear. If identities of the students are correct, indicative of post-1900.

Farmington's first brick school, about 1900.

in the world to prevent public schools from being a success in this State but public sentiment.

Brick Buildings – A New Era

In 1891, a two-room brick school house was built on land that still remains part of the Farmington School campus in present day. The buildings' bricks were made in Farmington on the

Allen property. The entire student population carried their books and sang as they marched two-by-two from the Ebenezer School to the new Farmington School, where Walter Shreve served as the first principal. The school house was located near the southeast corner of Double Springs Road and Rheas Mill Road.

In the early 1900s, Starks Brothers Nursery and several smaller fruit companies were established in Farmington. The thriving fruit business attracted new jobs and several new families to the area. Many of the students worked during the fruit harvest, which determined when school would be in session. School would begin after the August grape harvest, and would subsequently end before the strawberry harvest in May. Due to the increase in students, a third room was added to the east side of the school house, separated by a hallway from the two older rooms. The classrooms held first through fourth grades; fifth through eighth grades; and ninth and tenth grades. However, many students left their education after graduation from the eighth grade.

In the 1920s, Farmington school board members Al Bentley, John Buchanan, Floyd Couch, Albert Gaskill, M.G. Lewis, and John

Farmington's third school with an addition to the left.

Pettigrew voted to build a high school in the area. Much of the construction of the new school building came from volunteers, including Bill Brown, Garland Engels, Lee Pettigrew and the school board members. Water collected in the basement would freeze during construction, providing a temporary ice-skating rink for the students.

Eventually, the volunteers finished the basement and the carpenter Oliver Tucker finished the remainder of the school, which was 60 feet by 80 feet. There were two classrooms to be used for the high school grades, along with a large auditorium. Fewer and more spacious classrooms were preferred because this layout was easier to heat by using wood burning stoves, which were in use until the mid-1950s. The ensuing woodpile was often used for the students' recess activities. Farmington's original high school was opened in 1926 with O.L. Curtis and

rtesy of Catheine Shreve Foster

Claude Trimble as the first teachers. The initial graduating class was in 1928.

During recess many of the students would "walk the wall" on the outside of the schools. By holding on to rocks and positioning their feet on other rocks, the students' goal was to reach the other side without falling. The older girls would often sit on the steps in front of the high school while the younger girls played jump rope on the sidewalk.

A new tradition was started in 1928, when the school's graduates had their names engraved each year on the sidewalks. This tradition was continued until 2003. Through the years, many of the sidewalks were relocated to allow for the construction of more school buildings. The senior sidewalks years 1928-1959 and 1973-2000 are located on the high school campus near the building on 275 Rheas Mill Road. The senior sidewalks years 1960-1972 and 2000–2003 are located between the Middle School on 359 W. Rheas Mill Road and the football field.

The senior sidewalk idea might have originated from the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. Some say that the Farmington school colors and cardinal mascot may also have been borrowed from the university. The razorback mascot replaced the cardinal mascot for the University of Arkansas around 1910.

The students' drinking water was provided by a well on the school property. One incident recalls a student claiming that a fingernail was found in his drinking water. Rumors began that the spring feeding to the well came from under the cemetery, and for some time after that, students refused to drink the water from the well.

Most of the students interchanged walking to school and

Courtesy of the Shiloh Museum of Ozark History, WCHS Collection (P-453)

Farmington's first high school was later used as an elementary school and then as a storage building. In 1975 it was destroyed by fire.

riding horses three or four miles one way. The school offered a stable for the horses to stay during the day. The stable was located between the grade school and Highway 62, a location near what is now the Farmington gymnasium on 58 S. Double Springs Road.

The PTA and the Home Demonstration Club were active in raising funds for the Farmington schools, and in 1936 the two merged together to further their efforts and promotion. Fund raisers included organizing plays and performances and donating homemade pies to a food stand at the county fair. One year they organized a musical band with the younger students. The band, known as the Kiddie Band, was in high demand and performed at several programs. They also performed at the University of Arkansas Wesley Hall during a Teachers of North Arkansas Convention. The PTA members purchased material and sewed white suits and red ties as uniforms for the band members. After the performance, the children were taken to a drug

store for a very special and rare treat of ice cream.

In the 1940s the high school added more rooms by adding partitions to the current rooms. A cafeteria was opened in the basement; Miss Lucy Allen was the head cook. Much of the food served was grown in Farmington and canned by the local women. Pork was provided by the hogs raised on the school campus. The older boys built a hog pen just southeast of the high school. All the older students took turns feeding the hogs the lunchroom slop, which consisted of potato peelings and food scraps.

Community Schools

Smaller communities in the area had their own school houses that served those within a three to four mile radius. Communities near the Farmington area included Cemetery Hill, Walnut Grove, Bethel Grove, Highland, Savoy and Double Springs/White Rock. The smaller schools for these communities contained one to three rooms and typically taught grades one through eight.

In the 1940s Arkansas law makers, determined to keep up with the evolving educational needs of the time, required major changes in the public schools. One such transformation involved school consolidation and annexation. Many resisted the idea of consolidation, for fear of losing the sense of small and close-knit community. There were also concerns about the long commute for the children.

Some townspeople embraced the idea, knowing that a larger school district would have more to offer, such as a high school education. Many were already sending their children to Farmington or Fayetteville for grades nine through twelve. By 1949, all of the previously listed community schools had closed and consolidated with the Farmington School District.

The Cemetery Hill School (1887-1925) was located on the corner of Clyde Carnes Road and the Fayetteville Cane Hill Road. That section of the Fayetteville Cane Hill Road is now part of Highway 170. The small school served the communities of Cemetery Hill and Appleby, and consolidated with the Walnut Grove School in 1925.

Walnut Grove's school (1869-1946) had several different buildings; part of the last one is still standing near the Walnut Grove Presbyterian Church. Washington County records denote that the school was established in 1869. However, family accounts from the community confirm that there was a school long before the Civil War, and quite possibly as early as 1830. In 1947, many of the Walnut Grove students were faced with the decision between Farmington, Prairie Grove, or Fayetteville schools.

During this time there were rumors that Fayetteville was going to annex the Farmington school, causing many students and families to choose the Fayetteville School to avoid a later transition. The rumor, however, never became reality. Twenty years later in the 1960s, Farmington residents fought hard and won the right to have their own school district by resisting consolidation with the Fayetteville School District.

The Bethel Grove community was home to an earlier school house named Possum Trot, established in the 1860s. In 1877 the Bethel Grove School was opened, and remained so until 1947. In the early 1900s, the small community was home to the Ozark Fruit Company and a lime kiln. The thriving businesses brought new families to the area and a third school house was built in 1908. This new school house had two rooms and later gained a third; The building was torn down in 1977 and replaced with the Bethel Grove Community Center, which is still in use today for meetings, concerts, speakers and monthly potlucks.

The Highland School (1881-1930) was a one-room building shared with the Highland Church, which replaced an earlier log cabin that had burned in the early 1900s. In 1930 the Highland school consolidated with Farmington, with the exception of grades one through four, which remained at Highland for several years as a wing school of the Farmington District. Today the Highland Church remains open for church services.

The Savoy School (1877-1947) was a two-story building which additionally housed a Masonic Lodge. In 1898, a tornado destroyed the building. The children then attended the nearby

Courtesy of Catherine Shreve Foster

The Rhythm Band, also known as the Kiddie Band, in 1927. Front row left to right: Bonnie Carlton, Catherine Shreve, Hubert Hembree, Helen Jean Porter, Ernest Jones, Louise Jordan, Hayden Decker.
Second row: ?, Charles David McNeal, ?, Jenks Shreve, ?, John Ratcliff
Third row: ?, Milly Shreve, Betty Robertson, Ruth Thomas, ?, ?
Back row: Jack Decker, Waurika Shreve, Mildred King, ?, Lois Hamblen, ?, ?, ?, ? If you know the names of any of those students who are listed as question marks, send a note to info@washcohistoricalsociety.org.

Cook's Chapel School, until it later burned down. Another school building featuring an impressive bell tower was built around 1915, and remains standing today as the Savoy Community Center and a reminder of the once small, yet thriving, community.

The White Rock School (1869-1948) was located on the north side of Wedington Drive (Arkansas Highway 16) on White Rock Lane. The two-room school house was positioned off of the road, with the front door facing west. The school building was a replacement for an earlier one-room log cabin school house. Its location was near what is now the Penguin Ed's restaurant on 6347 W. Wedington Drive.

The White Rock Lane no longer contains the school house building, but only a small structure that was once used as a community center for the White Rock/Double Springs families.

After the consolidations, school buses became essential for student commute. The first school bus began running in 1930, after the Highland School consolidated with the Farmington School District. Farmington had one bus route for a period of time, but soon more buses were added for those children making the long commute to and from school every day.

In the mid-1940s, a group of high school students painted a mural on the wall of the basement cafeteria. Students Jack Decker, Willene Hickman, Shirley Kehn, Norma Jane Broyles, Gale Cato, and Jimmie King were assisted by a local artist, Mary Sharp. The mural was a painting of local buildings such as the Farmington grade school and high school, Starks Nursery Headquarters house, Starks fruit packing shed, and a mule barn. When the mural was completed, the students and their teacher held an open house to the community to unveil their masterpiece; to their surprise, five hundred guests attended to admire their work.

The Farmington yearbook, named *The Cardinal*, was first printed in 1948 with Eddie Simpson as the advisor and Jimmy King as the editor. The high school mascot was the Cardinal, and the Jr. High mascot was the Blue Jay for a short time.

In the early 1950s, many new features were added to the grade school, such as a long hallway, three new classrooms, administration office, and indoor bathrooms. Indoor bathrooms were also added to the high school. Prior to these renovations, the outhouses, also called privies, were used. The boys' privy was south of the school, and the girls' privy was located southeast of the school in a low area known for flooding during rain storms. Along with the new additions came gas heating, eliminating the need for wood stoves in each room.

Farmington's first basketball teams played on outdoor courts. Students brought hoes from home, raking and patting the court until the dirt was packed. The courts were marked with lines of

lime or flour. In the early 1950s an indoor gymnasium was built. In between two sections of bleachers was a stage used for school productions and social events. The Farmington High School song was often sung at the ballgames and other social events:

There is no place like Farmington
Dear old Farmington High
Where the girls are the fairest
The boys are the squarest
Of any old school that is nigh
There is no place like Farmington
Unity is our cry
We'll all stick together
In all kinds of weather
For dear old Farmington High

In the days before television, internet, and cell phones, school events served as the community's social time. Adults and students attended ballgames, high school plays, musicals and the Halloween carnival. Farmington's high school students started new traditions of class picnics at Lake Wedington and the Harmon playfield in Fayetteville, along with senior class trips, mock weddings, senior class pictures and the annual spring play. Many of the traditions lasted for several decades.

Later additions to the community included a new high school, built in 1959. That same year Farmington organized the school's first football team. The first field was south of the school, and with no lights all of the home games were played in the afternoon, or at the Prairie Grove or Lincoln fields. The new football field west of the gymnasium was completed in the fall of 1963 and featured lights, bleachers, bathrooms and a concession stand.

Over the years, many expansions have taken place in the Farmington School District, including new grade schools, a middle school, and ball parks. At the time of this publication, construction is taking place on a performing arts center, and a

basketball arena, off of Arkansas Highway 170. Few people can recall the wood stoves, outdoor basketball courts and community school houses. This text serves to keep those memories alive and to honor the progress and history of the Farmington schools.

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Contact Katie Tennant, executive director of Fayetteville Area Community Foundation, a local affiliate office of Arkansas Community Foundation. Contact her at fayettevillearea@arcf.org or 479-444-6880.

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